Amendment to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows.

Please cancel claim 40, without prejudice or disclaimer.

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application:

<u>Listing of Claims:</u>

Claims 1 to 30 (canceled)

- 31. (currently amended): A diagnostic reagent for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection comprising a solid phase sensitized with
- (a) a genetic recombinant HCV antigen having a molecular weight of 10,000 or more and
 - (b) conjugated HCV antigens comprising
 - (i) a first HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein; and
 - (ii) a second HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein;

wherein the first HCV antigen comprises a first synthetic <u>HCV</u> peptide <u>antigen</u> having a molecular weight of less than 10,000 and the second HCV antigen comprises a second synthetic <u>HCV</u> peptide <u>antigen</u> different from the first synthetic <u>HCV</u> peptide <u>antigen</u>, the second synthetic <u>HCV</u> peptide <u>antigen</u> having [[has]] a molecular weight of less than 10,000.

- 32. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen comprises an HCV non-structural region protein.
- 33. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen comprises NS3 antigen.
- 34. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the first and second HCV antigens are independently selected from the group consisting of HCV non-structural region proteins and HCV structural region proteins.
- 35. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the solid phase is directly sensitized with the genetic recombinant HCV antigen.

36. (currently amended): A diagnostic reagent for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection comprising a solid phase sensitized with (a) a genetic recombinant HCV antigen having a molecular weight of 10,000 or more and (b) one or more conjugated HCV antigens, wherein the conjugated HCV antigen comprises a synthetic HCV peptide antigen conjugated with a carrier protein and the synthetic HCV peptide antigen has a molecular weight of less than 10,000.

- 37. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the <u>synthetic HCV</u> <u>peptide</u> antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen is selected from the group consisting of core antigen, NS4 antigen and NS5 antigen.
- 38. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the <u>synthetic HCV</u> <u>peptide</u> antigen of the conjugated HCV antigen is selected from the group consisting of HCV non-structural region proteins and HCV structural region proteins.
- 39. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the <u>synthetic HCV</u> antigen peptide antigens of the conjugated HCV antigens comprise antigen comprises core peptide antigen, NS4 peptide antigen and NS5 peptide antigen.
 - 40. (canceled)
- 41. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the carrier protein comprises a water-soluble protein.
- 42. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 41, wherein the water-soluble protein is selected from the group consisting of BSA, ovalbumin and hemocyanin.
- 43. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen is conjugated with a carrier protein.

44-50. (canceled)

51. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the solid phase comprises carrier particles.

52-54. (canceled)

- 55. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 51, wherein the carrier particle is selected from the group consisting of polystyrene latex particle, copolymer latex particle, erythrocyte and gelatin particle.
- 56. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the solid phase comprises carrier particles.
- 57. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 56, wherein the carrier particles are selected from the group consisting of polystyrene latex particle, copolymer latex particle, erythrocyte and gelatin particle.
 - 58. (canceled)
- 59. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the <u>first and second</u> synthetic <u>HCV</u> peptide <u>antigens have</u> [[has]] a molecular weight of 1,000 to 5,000.
 - 60. (canceled)
- 61. (currently amended): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the synthetic <u>HCV</u> peptide antigen has a molecular weight of 1,000 to 5,000.
- 62. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the solid phase comprises a microtiter plate or a test tube.
- 63. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the solid phase comprises a microtiter plate or a test tube.

64. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the carrier protein has a molecular weight of 10,000 to 1,000,000.

- 65. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the carrier protein has a molecular weight of 10,000 to 1,000,000.
- 66. (previously presented): A diagnostic reagent for hepatitis C virus (HCV) infection comprising a solid phase sensitized with
- (a) a genetic recombinant HCV antigen having a molecular weight of 10,000 or more and
 - (b) conjugated HCV antigens comprising
 - (i) a first HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein; and
 - (ii) a second HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein;

wherein each of the first HCV antigen and the second HCV antigen has a molecular weight of less than 10,000, and the first HCV antigen is core antigen.

- 67. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 66, wherein the second HCV antigen is NS4 antigen.
- 68. (previously presented): The diagnostic reagent of claim 66, wherein the conjugated HCV antigens further comprises a third HCV antigen conjugated with a carrier protein.
- 69. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 31, wherein the genetic recombinant HCV antigen is conjugated with a carrier protein.
- 70. (new): The diagnostic reagent of claim 36, wherein the solid phase is directly sensitized with the genetic recombinant HCV antigen.